

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

E1 1. (Currently Amended): A method for automatically processing printer errors occurring during printing of a print job in a virtual printer system wherein a virtual printer is configurable with a plurality of physical print engines, comprising the steps of:

5 segmenting a print job into a defined job stack for each of the plurality of print engines of the virtual printing system that will print a defined portion of the print job;

detecting occurrence of an error condition during printing of at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job in one of the print engines in the virtual printer system; and

10 re-routing the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job not processed by the one print engine in the virtual printer system to a second print engine in the virtual printer system.

2. (Currently Amended): The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of detecting comprises the steps of:

reading an error status signal generated by [[a]] one of the print engines in the virtual printer system;

5 interrupting the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job in which the error status signal was generated; and

releasing one of the print engines from the virtual printer system in which the error condition occurred.

<sup>3</sup>/~~7~~ (Previously Presented): The method of Claim <sup>1</sup>~~8~~, wherein the step of re-routing comprises the steps of:

defining the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job; and

attaching a separator page to the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job.

<sup>4</sup> Claim <sup>8</sup>~~8~~ (Previously Presented): The method of Claim <sup>3</sup>~~7~~, wherein the step of defining comprises the step of:

defining the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job as the unprinted part of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job including the page of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job whereupon the error occurred.

<sup>5</sup> Claim <sup>5</sup>~~9~~ (Previously Presented): The method of Claim <sup>4</sup>~~8~~, wherein the step of attaching comprises the steps of:

creating a separator page associated with the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job; and

attaching the separator page to the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job.

<sup>6</sup> Claim <sup>6</sup>~~10~~ (Previously Presented): The method of Claim <sup>5</sup>~~9~~, wherein the step of creating a separator page comprises the step of:

designating an additional page to be inserted in the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job following the last page that resulted in generation of an end-of-page signal.

Claim <sup>7</sup>~~11~~ (Previously Presented): The method of Claim <sup>1</sup>~~8~~, wherein the step of re-routing comprises the steps of:

reconfiguring the virtual printer system if a next print engine in the virtual printer system is not available;

5       printing the re-routed remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job; and

assembling the pages of the print job printed after re-routing with the pages of the print job printed before re-routing.

<sup>8</sup>  
Claim <sup>8</sup>~~12~~ (Currently Amended): An apparatus for automatically processing printer errors occurring during printing of a print job in a virtual printer system wherein a virtual printer is configurable with a plurality of physical print engines, comprising:

5       a job stacking device for segmenting a print job into a defined job stack for each of the plurality of print engines of the virtual printing system that will print a defined portion of the print job;

a detector for detecting occurrence of an error condition during printing of at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job in one of the print engines in the virtual printer system; and

10       a router for re-routing the remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job not processed by the one print engine in the virtual printer system to a second print engine in the virtual printer system.

<sup>9</sup>  
Claim <sup>9</sup>~~13~~ (Currently Amended): The apparatus of Claim <sup>8</sup>~~12~~, wherein said detector comprises:

a reading device for reading an error status signal generated by [[a]] one of the print engines in the virtual printer system;

5       an interrupt device for interrupting said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job in which said error status signal was generated; and

a device for releasing said one of the print engines from said virtual printer system in which said error condition occurred.

<sup>10</sup>  
Claim ~~14~~ (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim ~~12~~<sup>7</sup>, wherein said router comprises:

a remainder determination device for defining said remainder of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job; and

5 an attaching device for attaching a separator page to said remainder of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job.

<sup>11</sup>  
Claim ~~15~~ (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim ~~14~~<sup>10</sup>, wherein said remainder determination device is operable:

to define said remainder of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job as the unprinted part of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job including the page of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job whereupon said error occurred.

<sup>12</sup>  
Claim ~~16~~ (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim ~~14~~<sup>10</sup>, wherein said attaching device comprises:

a separator device for creating a separator page associated with said remainder of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job prior to said attaching device attaching said separator page to said remainder of said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job.

<sup>13</sup>  
Claim ~~17~~ (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim ~~14~~<sup>10</sup>, wherein said attaching device comprises:

means for designating an additional page to be inserted in said at least a portion of said associated defined portion of the print job following the last page that resulted in generation of an end-of-page signal.

Claim <sup>14</sup>18 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim <sup>12</sup>12, wherein said router comprises:

a configuring device for reconfiguring said virtual printer system if a next print engine in said virtual printer system is not available;

5 a printer for printing said re-routed remainder of the at least a portion of the associated defined portion of the print job; and

a collator for assembling said pages of said print job printed after re-routing with said pages of said print job printed before re-routing.

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